GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:157
ANSWERED ON:13.03.2002
MOTHER-CHILD PROGRAMME
SUBODH MOHITE;YEMPARALA VENKATESWARA RAO

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have started `Mother-Child Programme` aimed at reducing the risk of HIV transmission to the newborn;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the clinical tests of the drug, used in the programme, has been done;

(d) if so, the reports thereon;

(e) whether adverse side effects have been reported by Federal Drug Authority; and

(f) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR)

(a)to(f): A statement is laid on the table of the Lok Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 157 FOR 13.3.2002

(a)&(b): In view of the emerging threat of transmission of HIV infection from HIV infected pregnant mother to her baby, Government of India has started the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission Programme, in the country.The feasibility study on prevention of mother to child transmission was initiated in March, 2000 in 11 institutions located in five HIV high prevalence States namely : Maharashtra (5), Tamil Nadu (3), Andhra Pradesh (1), Karnataka (1), Manipur (1).The first phase of the study has been completed in Septemebr, 2001. In this phase of the study, short course regimen of Azidothymidine (AZT) was administered to pregnant mothers who attended antenatal clinics from 36 weeks of gestation and during labour at the above institutions. In the second phase of the feasibility study at these centres, single dose Nevirapine to both HIV infected mother and baby pair is being administered for prevention of mother to child transmission. This drug has an additional advantage over azidothymidine as it is administered in single dose, besides being cost effective as compared to short course regimen of azidothymidine.

Encouraged with the results of the feasibility studies, Government has decided to scale up Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission Programme in the entire country in a phased manner. In the first phase of the programme, Medical Colleges of the six high prevalence States namely Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Manipur and Nagaland will be covered followed by District Hospitals in these States. In the second phase of the programme, Medical Colleges of other States will be covered.

(c)&(d): There have been extensive clinical trials of both the antiretroviral drugs azidothymidine and Nevirapine world-wide. Both the drugs have been found safe for the use in prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV infection.Azidothymidine and Nevirapine were included in the WHO model list of essential drugs in 1999 solely for indicating the prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV infection.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) technical declaration in October, 2000, carefully reviewed the available information and concluded that benefits of decreasing mother to child transmission with the Prophylaxis of these antiretroviral drugs, greatly outweighed concern related to development of drug resistance.

(e)&(f): Central Drug Standards Control Organisation (CDSCO), Government of India, which is the Federal Drug Authority in India, has not reported any adverse side effects of these drugs.